

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 08377 160755Z

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SUBJ: PRC MEDIA ON ISSUE OF CHINESE SUPPORT FOR SOVIET RETURN
OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES TO JAPAN

REF: TOKYO 10483

1. PEKING HAS UTILIZED ITS DOMESTIC AND HONG KONG MEDIA ORGANS TO MANIFEST, IN A LOW-KEY MANNER, DISPLEASURE WITH JAPANESE FONMIN MIYAZAWA'S RECENT PUBLIC CRITICISM OF CHINESE SUPPORT FOR THE JAPANESE STRUGGLE FOR RETURN OF THE NORTHER TERRITORIES. NCNA ARTICLES ON JULY 14 AND 15 CITED SENTIMENT IN JAPAN "CENSURING" MIYAZAWA'S ALLEGED "AMLIGNING" OF THE CHINESE SUPPORT ON THE ISSUE, WHICH HE TERMED "INTERFERENCE" IN A BILATERAL MATTER BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE SOVIET UNION. NCNA, THUS FAR HAS REFRAINED FROM GENERATING ANY COMMENTARY OF ITS OWN, CARRYING INSTEAD TOKYO-SOURCED REPORTS ON THE JAPANESE REACTION. THESE HAVE CHARACTERIZED THE MIYAZAWA REMARKS AS "COMPLETELY ANTI-PEOPLE, ANTI-CHINA, AND PRO-SOVIET," DESCRIBING HIS "SUBMISSIVE" STANCE AS SUGGESTING FEAR OF BREZHNEV'S THREATS AND AN ATTEMPT TO COVER UP SOVIET

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PAGE 02 HONG K 08377 160755Z

HEGEMONIC BEHAVIOR. PRC DOMESTIC MEDIA HAVE FREQUENTLY

RESORTED TO SUCH TACTICS TO CONVEY CHINA'S VIEWS WHEN PEKING PREFERRED TO AVOID DIRECT COMMENTARY ON A SUBJECT.

2. THE PRC-OWNED TA KUNG PAO IN HONG KONG, WHILE ECHOING THESE THEMES FROM THE NCNA REPORTS, WENT A BIT FURTHER. THE PAPER'S JULY 16 COMMENTARY FOUND IT "STRANGE" THAT A PERSON OF THE FONMIN'S STATURE WOULD MAKE SUCH AN ATTACK WHICH IT CONTENDS IS NOT IN ACCORD WITH THE JAPANESE PEOPLES' VIEW THAT THE CHINESE SUPPORT FOR THE JAPANESE EFFORT IS "COMPLETELY CORRECT." THE COMMENTARY ALSO MAINTAINED THAT THE SOVIET-OCCUPIED BASES POSE A DIRECT THREAT TO JAPAN AND HAVE PERMITTED SOVIET HARRASSMENT OF JAPANESE FISHERMEN. PROVIDING RATIONALE FOR PEKING'S STANCE, THE PAPER ASSERTED THAT JAPAN CAN ONLY SUCCEED IN REGAINING CONTROL OF THE ISLANDS BY MARSHALLING WIDE-SPREAD INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT.

3. THE COMMENTARY ALSO BRIEFLY REFERRED TO REPORTS OF MIYAZAWA'S RECENT MEETING WITH SENATOR MANSFIELD, NOTING THE FORMER'S ALLEGED DESIRE TO SEE NO SPEEDY NORMALIZATION OF U.S.-CHINA RELATIONS. IT CITED YOMIURI SHIMBUN'S VIEW THAT SUCH COMMENTS ARE "RASH" AND NOTED THE EXISTENCE OF REACTIONARY PRO-TAIWAN ELEMENTS IN THE LDP. IT CONCLUDED THAT THOSE IN JAPAN WHO WOULD OBSTRUCT THE FRIENDSHIP AND MUTUAL SUPPORT BETWEEN THE CHINESE AND JAPANESE PEOPLES WILL MEET WITH REJECTION.

4. COMMENT: PEKING HAS LONG BEE AWARE OF THE MIKI GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE FOR A TEMPERING OF CHINESE SUPPORT ON THE RETURN OF THE SOVIET-CONTROLLED NORTHERN TERRITORIES TO JAPAN. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE CHINESE HAVE MADE IT EQUALLY CLEAR THAT SUCH SUPPORT WILL CONTINUE AND IS LINKED WITH PEKING'S PARAMOUNT CONCERN WITH CONTAINING MOSCOW'S HEGEMONIC EFFORTS. THE APPARENTLY ENHANCED CHINESE CONCERN HAS BEEN A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR IN THE INCREASED LEVEL OF PRC MEDIA OUTPUT ON ALL ISSUES IN SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS IN THE PAST YEAR. IN PART, IT ACCOUNTS FOR THE HIGH-LEVEL TREATMENT THE CHINESE ACCORDED THE MAY VISIT OF A TOKYO SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE RECOVERY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES DELEGATION WHICH WAS RECEIVED BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VICE PREMIER CHI TENG-KUEI. THE CURRENT PRC MEDIA TREATMENT ALSO SUGGESTS THAT PEKING FEELS THE DAYS OF THE MIKI GOVERNMENT ARE NUMBERED AND BELIEVES THAT PRO-CHINA SENTIMENT IN JAPAN WILL SERVE TO LIMIT ANY HARM TO SINO-JAPANESE RELATIONS WHICH COULD STEM FROM THE MIKI GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE ON THE ISSUE.

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